

# CHOOSING THE RIGHT PET

Usdan Institute  
for Animal  
Health Education

**AMC**  
SINCE 1910  
ANIMAL MEDICAL CENTER

Use this list of pros and cons to help you choose a new pet for you and your family!



DOG

**PROS:**

- Friendly and affectionate
- Bond to owners
- Offer unconditional love and loyalty

**CONS:**

- Need a lot of care and attention
- Expensive over the cost of a lifetime
- May not be allowed in all homes
- Require daily exercise



BIRD

**PROS:**

- Extremely social, smart & interactive
- Do not need to be walked outside
- No weekly grooming required
- Good pets for small spaces

**CONS:**

- Require specialized veterinary care
- Can be messy and loud
- Require a lot of attention (2 hrs of interaction per day, minimum!)
- Can be clingy



CAT

**PROS:**

- Affectionate
- Relatively easy to housetrain
- Easily adaptable

**CONS:**

- Don't need to be walked
- Expensive over the course of a lifetime
- Require daily interaction to keep mentally stimulated and avoid obesity



FISH

**PROS:**

- Hypoallergenic
- Affordable
- Don't need much space
- Relatively easy to care for

**CONS:**

- Certain types are aggressive or confrontational
- Require good husbandry
- Certain types may outgrow their original tanks



HAMSTER

**PROS:**

- Fairly clean
- Like to live alone
- Don't smell or make much noise
- Relatively cheap and low maintenance

**CONS:**

- They bite
- Nocturnal; most cage noise is at night so may be disruptive to sleeping children



REPTILE

**PROS:**

- Make very little noise
- Hypoallergenic
- Don't usually smell
- Most can live in small spaces

**CONS:**

- Most need live/freshly dead insects/mice for food
- Don't bond to owners; not cuddly
- Need specialized veterinary care
- May carry bacteria (i.e. salmonella)



RABBIT

**PROS:**

- Quiet
- Personable and bond to owners
- Can be litter box trained
- No walks
- Can live in a small space

**CONS:**

- Require specialized veterinary care
- Should be spayed/neutered
- Be careful around children - rabbits can be easily hurt



GUINEA PIG

**PROS:**

- Great for kids: easy to handle, social and hardy
- Live in relatively small spaces
- Love people
- Clean

**CONS:**

- Require specialized veterinary care
- Require daily interaction and exercise
- Social animals that like being with other pigs